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## Biblical Work and Workers.

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The recent meeting in Philadelphia of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis was largely attended and full of interest. Dr. T. W. Chambers of New York presided. The following papers were read: "Anomalies of the New Testament," by Prof. E. P. Gould, of the Episcopal Divinity School. A treatise on the "Song of Songs," in which Prof. Henry Ferguson, of Trinity College, endeavored to prove the identity of the Shepherd Lover and King. "Palestine and Egypt, 1400 B. C." by Prof. M. Jastrow, of the University of Pennsylvania. "Light Thrown on Certain Biblical Passages by Talmudic Usage," by Rab. M. Jastrow, Ph. D. An analysis of Exodus 13-22 was given by the Rev. B. W. Bacon. "The Assyrian, Phœnician and Hebrew Months, with special reference to the Old Testament," by Rev. W. Moss. Arnolt, Ph. D. Some interesting notes upon "Difficult Passages in the Old Testament" were presented by Prof. J. P. Peters, Ph. D., of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. H. C. Trumbull, editor of the *S. S. Times*, read a paper entitled "Jonah in Nineveh." Prof. Nathaniel Schmidt presented the last paper, a discussion concerning the "Character of Christ's Last Meal." Dr. Hilprecht, who was to have read a paper entitled "A New Etymology of Nineveh," was unable to be present for that purpose, and his paper, an original research based on the cuneiform literature, will be published. Other papers were received from absent members, but lack of time forbade the reading of them. The discussions were all of high value, and awakened spirited comment and debate from the body of hearers.

The *American Institute of Sacred Literature* held its winter session in Chicago, Dec. 18th-21st, the programme presenting a discussion of the Life and Times of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the ground which is to be covered by the International Sunday-school Lessons during the next six months. The effort to promote a more critical study of the Bible, and to arouse an interest in sacred literature, was abundantly successful. The following instructors and lecturers contributed to the programme, making it one of the highest interest, scholarship and value: Pres. W. G. Ballantine, D. D., Rev. J. H. Barrows, D. D., Rev. F. M. Bristol, D. D., Prof. S. I. Curtiss, D. D., Rt. Rev. Bp. Samuel Fallows; Prof. E. T. Harper, Ph. D., Pres. W. R. Harper, Prof. Chas. Horswell, Ph. D., Mr. J. L. Houghteling, Mr. B. F. Jacobs, Prof. Herrick Johnson, D. D., Rev. Wm. M. Lawrence, D. D., Prof. Chas. J. Little, D. D. LL. D., Pres. W. C. Roberts, D. D. LL. D., Rev. Jno. Rouse, D. D., Prof. H. M. Scott, D. D., Prof. M. S. Terry, D. D., Prof. R. F. Weidner, D. D., Prof. A. C. Zenos, D. D. The critical questions concerned with the second part of the Book of Isaiah were treated by Pres. Harper and Prof. Curtis, the former speaking of points therein about which there is disagreement, the latter of points therein about which there is agreement. An abstract of this interesting discussion will be found on another page. The spiritual lessons to be drawn from a study of the prophets were set forth with clearness and power, and practical suggestions as to the application of the truth gained were presented for all classes of Christian workers. There

was in the session an admirable balance of the critical, spiritual and practical elements, which quite set at nought the objection sometimes raised that the critical study of the Bible is injurious to practical Christianity. The popular interest awakened by this winter session of the *Institute* would seem to indicate that former indifference to these subjects was due largely to the fact that they had not been studied aright, and suggests the line on which a new era of Bible study is to be worked out. It is proposed to hold another session within a few months which will discuss, in a way similar to this, the material of the International Lessons for the last half of the year. Plans are also making for a series of University Extensive lectures, which will accompany the progress of the Sunday-schools in their study, to be given on the North, West and South sides of Chicago.

The death of Dr. Abraham Kuenen, which took place in Leyden, Dec, 18th, deprives the destructive critical school of its most distinguished member. He was sixty-three years of age, and for the last thirty-six years had been Professor of Theology in the Dutch University of Leyden. His first important work was his "Historico-Critical Investigation into the Origin and Collection of the Old Testament Books," which was published in three volumes 1861-6. This work exerted a great influence, both in England and in Germany. Dr. Kuenen came into greatest prominence through his Hibbert Lectures, delivered during 1882 in London and at Oxford University, his subject being "National Religions and Universal Religions." He took this occasion to deliver publicly, in the presence of the most learned theologians and critics, the views of his school on the religion of Israel. The Hebrew Faith was divided into two parts, the first from Moses to the eighth century prophets, called the era of the "Popular Religion" of Israel; the second, from the eighth century to Christ, the era of "National Religion," the Judaism of the Prophets. The evolutional process through which this object of Israel's worship passed before it appeared in Hebrew thought as the grandest conception of Deity, he ascribes to the work of the prophets, who transferred to this popular Deity the nobler ethical attributes (justice, law, omnipotence) which formed the basis of that moral law by which these prophets were themselves dominated. Dr. Kuenen had thus diverged widely from Ewald, who had been his first guide and master in biblical exegesis, and had become associated with Graf and Reuss in their destructive criticism. His position has since been made familiar to English readers through the work of Wellhausen and Robertson Smith. He himself further developed it in his best known book entitled "The Religion of Israel to the Fall of the Jewish State." He was engaged, at the time of his death, upon a revised edition of his "Investigation," was superintending a comprehensive translation and commentary on the Old Testament by Dutch scholars, and was recasting his "Religion of Israel." He was a man of kindly spirit, possessed of warm personal friends. He was a student of the Bible who earnestly and fearlessly sought the truth concerning the literature which he investigated. He treated theology from the point of view of the analytical chemist, and became to some extent an iconoclast of true religion. No one will deny him the respect to which high and genuine scholarship entitles him. No one should be impatient over the work he has done. Much of it has been shown to be wrong, all of it has served to make plain what is right and true concerning the Jewish history and religion.